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ABSTRACT

This brief report presents data on employment and postsecondary persistence and attainment of higher education students, based on data from the 1990 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-up. Major findings include: (1) five years after initial enrollment, 89 percent of students had worked at some time while enrolled, with 75 percent working part time and 15 percent working full time; (2) students enrolled at four-year institutions were likely to work fewer hours than students who attended public two-year or for-profit institutions; (3) only 31 percent of students who worked full time had attained a degree or were still enrolled five years after initial enrollment, compared to 79 percent of students who worked 1-15 hours per week; (4) students who worked full time were more likely to attend school exclusively part time and part time students were less likely to persist and attain a degree five years after initial entry. Tables and graphs detail data on: percentage of 1989 beginning postsecondary students, by average hours worked per week while enrolled and control and type of first institution; and percentage of 1989-90 beginning postsecondary students who attained a degree or were still enrolled by spring 1994, by control and type of first institution and average hours worked per week. (DB)

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INDICATOR MONTH

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Employment and postsecondary persistence and attainment

May 1998

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Faced with the rising costs of higher education, students are increasingly opting to work in order to help finance their postsecondary education. Although the experience gained from working while enrolled may ease students' transition to full-time employment after completing a degree, students who work full time have less time available to commit to studies.

- **Five years after their initial enrollment in 1989–90, 89 percent of beginning postsecondary students had worked at some time while enrolled. The majority of students (75 percent) worked part time (less than 34 hours per week), but 15 percent worked full time (34 or more hours per week).**

- **Students who first enrolled in 4-year institutions were more likely than those who started at public 2-year or private, for-profit institutions to work 1–15 hours per week, while students in public 2-year or private, for-profit institutions were more likely than those in 4-year institutions to have worked 34 or more hours per week. Students who first enrolled in private, for-profit institutions were less likely than students who started in other types of institutions to report working while enrolled.**

- **Regardless of the type of institution first attended, students who worked full time were less likely than students who worked part time (1–33 hours) to have attained a degree or to still be enrolled 5 years after their initial entry into postsecondary education. Overall, 31 percent of students who worked full time while enrolled attained a degree or were still enrolled compared to 79 percent of students who worked 1–15 hours per week and 65 percent of those who worked 15–33 hours per week.**

- **Students who work full time may need to adjust the intensity of their enrollment. Students who worked full time (34 or more hours per week) were more likely than students who worked part time to attend exclusively part time. At each type of institution, those who attended exclusively part time were less likely to persist and attain 5 years after their initial entry into postsecondary education than their counterparts who attended sometimes or always full time.**

Percentage of 1989–90 beginning postsecondary students, by average hours worked per week while enrolled and control and type of first institution: 1994

Control and type of first institution	Did not work	Average hours worked per week while enrolled*		
		Less than 15 hours	15–33 hours	34 or more hours
Total	**10.9**	**31.2**	**43.4**	**14.5**
Public 4-year	5.4	41.1	46.7	6.8
Private, not-for-profit 4-year	5.7	52.8	36.5	4.9
Public 2-year	9.8	22.2	46.2	21.8
Private, for-profit	32.2	15.9	34.6	17.3

Percentage of 1989–90 beginning postsecondary students who attained a degree or were still enrolled by spring 1994, by control and type of first institution and average hours worked per week while enrolled

Average hours worked per week while enrolled*	Total	Control and type of first institution			
		Public 4-year	Private, not-for-profit 4-year	Public 2-year	Private, for-profit
Total	**63.0**	**73.2**	**80.5**	**51.4**	**61.4**
Did not work	51.8	55.9	72.8	43.1	55.2
Less than 15 hours	78.8	83.7	86.6	68.5	73.4
15–33 hours	65.3	72.0	78.0	56.9	70.4
34 or more hours	30.7	30.7	40.3	26.1	45.3

* "Average hours worked per week while enrolled" was calculated relative to students' enrollment and included only hours for those months students were both working and enrolled up to first attainment (if any) or last enrollment.

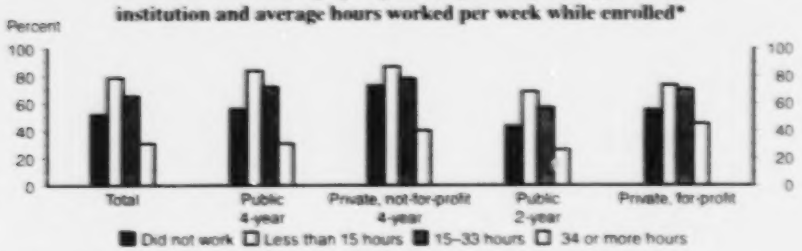
NOTE: Does not include students enrolled in either public less-than-2-year or private, not-for-profit less-than-4-year institutions.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-up (BPS:90/94).

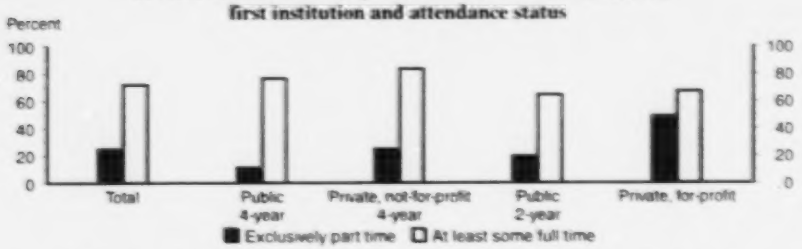
Employment and postsecondary persistence and attainment

Percentage of 1989–90 beginning postsecondary students, by average hours worked per week while enrolled* and control and type of first institution: 1994

Percentage of 1989–90 beginning postsecondary students who attained a degree or were still enrolled by spring 1994, by control and type of first institution and average hours worked per week while enrolled*



Percentage of 1989–90 beginning postsecondary students who attained a degree or were still enrolled by spring 1994, by control and type of first institution and attendance status



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SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study, Second Follow-up (BPS:90/94).

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